

OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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**FIRE ALARM ADVISORY COMMITTEE****MEETING ACCOUNT
THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2002**

Committee Goal: To advise the State Fire Marshal on proposed regulations and technical issues by providing views and comments from members of industry, the public, and the fire service.

Meeting Attendees:

Bill Carmack, Division Chief, Chair
Diane Arend, Vice-Chair, SFM Building Materials Listing Program Coordinator
John Guhl, SFM Technical Assistant
Darcell Hermann, SFM Program Assistant
Shane M. Clary, Bay Alarm Company
Scott Corrin, UC Riverside, Environmental Health & Safety
Mike Novotny, OSHPD

Members Absent:

Art Arlow, Fire Alarm Consultant
Arnold Cairns, Fire Alarm Consultant
Brian Heyman, Division of the State Architect
Howard Hopper, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.
Bill Hopple, Simplex
Jon Kapis, Rolf Jensen and Associates
Michael Reeser, Santa Rosa Fire Equipment Serv.
Patrick Ward, Schirmer Engineering

Guests:

Yevonne Costa, State Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Engineering
Leslie R. Billington, State Fire Marshal's Office, Code Development

Opening Remarks:

Division Chief, Bill Carmack called the meeting to order at 9:45 am at the SFM's Headquarters conference room in Sacramento.

Motion to approve the July Meeting Account was made by Bill Carmack; minutes were approved.

Bill Carmack announced that this meeting would consist of discussing the Update of SFM Fire Alarm Plan Review Check List/Inspection Training Manual, Enhancement of BML Listings-NEMA Comments, NFPA 72 & CFC 1007.3 Update-Qualifications for Design and Installation of Fire Alarms, CFIRS update, Regulations report, BML update.

Update of SFM Fire Alarm Plan Review Guide and Check List Form:

Item was tabled until the next meeting. Received recommendation from Jon Kapis for consideration.

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Action Item:

Bill Hopple and Mike Reeser to review guide and form and present recommendations at next meeting.

Enhancement of BML Listings-NEMA Comments:

Bill Carmack asked if the FPO's had any interest in adding data fields to the listing sheets to aid in the plan review process. It was suggested to add UL listed category information to serve as a detailed reference tool although committee commented that many reviewers merely look for the number rather than read the data. They refer to the manufacturer's specification sheets when more information is needed.

It was noted that plans get rejected due to (1) superimposed numbers, (2) listing expiration date, (3) manufacturer failing to list a component. Committee members expressed the understanding of the purpose of the listing sheet is to show that the parts and pieces listed have been evaluated and are appropriate to be used. Liability, listing expiration date problems and compatibility issues were discussed. Member stated that the compatibility issue on notification appliances as well as addressed analog systems will come up in the future.

Committee discussed adding compatibility information to the listing sheet. Although the listing sheet refers to the manufacturer's installation instructions for more detailed information, the committee responded with instances where manufacturers conflicted with their own data sheets due to component changes. Even subtle changes have caused conflict and confusion.

Comment that the lack of uniformity throughout California continues to cause plan review problems and the industry wants a solution found. Bill Carmack stressed education and more exposure to help solve this problem.

An idea was proposed to create a forum on the web-site for posting of technical issues and advisories relating to fire alarm and other systems. In addition, it was suggested that manufacturers be required to send copies of technical advisories to the SFM.

Diane Arend stated that currently the SFM posts code interpretations as well as informational bulletins on the web-site. Chief Carmack stated that questions and recommendations that do not encumber the listing sheet will continue to be reviewed. After lengthy review, it was determined that recommendations received came from people who did not read the listing sheet, and the information was listed.

Committee suggested that possibly the fire service would benefit from a more informative and directive listing resulting in less plan rejection. It was also suggested that NEMA supply the SFM with additional information.

NFPA 72 & CFC 1007.3 Update-Qualifications for Design and Installation of Fire Alarms:

John Guhl stated that SFM follows what NFPA 72 of the 1999 states, that there is no amendment for change in design qualifications. The issue of NICET certification was discussed with committee commenting on the continual desire for clarity and consistency regarding "shall" verses "should". Suggestion was made to develop a qualification program and put it in Title 19.

Action Item:

John Guhl to research historical file on NICET language/proposal and research other states' NICET requirements for the next meeting to discuss and review.

CFIRS Update:

Yvonne Costa gave the committee an update on the new NFIRS forms, stating that the basic form captures 80% of all the data. Reports specific to the fire detection systems were shared with committee as examples of what NFIRS is capable of. The change over date is set for January 1, 2003. To be up and running, all participants must comply by that date. Embracing the NFIRS structure in its entirety makes it a more useful and accurate tool for CAFAA and other industry groups that want to track performance. Although interest in reporting the data is strong on the prevention and engineering side, the committee foresees problems from the fire service side as operations has low interest in reporting data. Training classes were instituted to teach the importance of reporting and the value of accurate reporting. Chief Carmack asks for the committee's input on any recommendations that can be shared with the CFIRS division.

Regulations Report:

Leslie Billington reported that SB575's 45 day comment period ends August 9th. Two comments have been received, one in favor, one dealt with rumor dispel. The committee was asked to alert Leslie with any errors or omissions found in Title 24 prior to submitting package to Building Standards Commission for error correction. The rule-making package is on the web-site as a reference. The topic of SFM standards found in part 12 was raised by Leslie Billington for committee discussion. It was suggested that SFM make issue of Building Standards Commission leaving out information. Leslie proposes to take all standards out of 12 and put into chapter 35. Question was asked regarding standards 1272, 1, 2, 3 are valid. Leslie suggests to fix or repeal in the next rule making cycle. Leslie asks for recommendation as to what to do. Diane Arend suggested this be presented to the Division Chiefs. Leslie suggests that a good rulemaking effort would be to concentrate on getting chapter 35 cleaned up and asks for ideas be brought to her attention. Put effort into chapter 35 and Article 91.

BML Update:

Diane Arend reports that the listings for the 2002-2003 have been posted on the web-site. Mike Novotny suggested SFM prepare an information letter on the posting of the listings on the web-site. Mike would then E-mail the letter to the So. CAL membership.

Bill Carmack informed the committee that an additional deputy has been hired to assist in the BML program. Diane Arend states that a company list is being created to be posted on the web-site, to make it more user-friendly. Bill Carmack agrees with committee suggestion to look into the tracking of hits to the web-site.

Open Forum:

It has been found that several SFM Code Interpretations posted on the web-site are incorrect or misleading. It is believed that the writers of the interpretations are not asking for committee input. This has become a big concern of SFM. The runner service interpretation was specifically mentioned. Chief Carmack supports receiving any recommendation for correcting misleading information posted on the web-site.

Chief Carmack makes recommendation to John Guhl, who is a member of the Code Interpretation Committee, to use members of the advisory committee and other selected interested parties as consultants on many fire alarm issues. Bill Carmack made a motion to direct interpretation issues to John Guhl to take to the Code Interpretation Committee. Shane Clarey stated that immediate correction is needed for 617.02 interpretation.

Bill Hopple made suggestion for possible preparation of SFM guide letter dealing with advisable time for replacement of fire alarm control unit. He states that regulations do not address the issue, therefore the designers are becoming burdened. A guide letter would at least contain some suggestions. Chief Carmack suggests to return the suggestion back to Bill Hopple for expansion on his comments. More information is necessary for a response.

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Bill Carmack stated to the committee that Mike Novotny's tabled item regarding patient room corridor lamps will be brought up for comment.

Set Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting was tentatively set for 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, October 23, 2002 at the State Fire Marshal's headquarters conference room in Sacramento. The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.